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N E W S   RELEASE

Education Department releases data on student growth
New online tool shows information on improvement in mathematics, reading

A new online tool that the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE) released today (May 15) provides on-line data about student progress on the annual state assessments in mathematics and reading.

The report, called the Rhode Island Growth Model Visualization Tool, which RIDE developed using Race to the Top funds, shows two views of student achievement: what percentage of students attained proficiency on the state NECAP mathematics and reading assessments and how much progress students have made, relative to their academic peers, from one year's assessment to the next. Those using the tool will see that some schools achieved high performance but showed limited growth while others may show significant growth despite low overall performance.

"The Rhode Island Growth Model adds a new dimension to our reports on school achievement, which will help guide us as we work to accelerate all of our schools toward greatness," said Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. "The Growth Model Visualization Tool is a user-friendly, interactive web page that allows educators, parents, and all community members to see in a clear, graphic presentation which of our schools are most effectively advancing student achievement, regardless of their overall performance level."

Up to now, RIDE measured school progress using only aggregated data – for example, the change in the percentage of students who achieved proficiency from one year to the next. The Growth Model measures progress using individual student data.

The information on student growth is available at the district, school, and grade level (grades 3 through 7), as well as by student group (ethnic groups, students living in poverty, English learners, and students with disabilities). Pending approval from the U.S. Department of Education, RIDE will use the Growth Model data as part of the Rhode Island system of school classifications and accountability.

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Beginning next year, RIDE will calculate growth data at the teacher and classroom level, and teachers will be able to use data about student growth to improve instruction and to target their professional development. Beginning in 2013-14, schools will use growth data as part of the process of educator evaluations. RIDE will not publish or release classroom-level or teacher-level growth data.

The growth-data reports are available for elementary and middle schools only. (High-school reports are not currently available because under the NECAP state assessments high-school students are tested only in grade 11.)

The Growth Model Visualization Tool is available at:

> http://rigm.ride.ri.gov

How RIDE calculates student growth:

RIDE calculates Student Growth Percentile scores (from 1 to 99) for each student, based on the student's performance compared with his or her academic peers, that is, compared with students who scored similarly on NECAP assessments. RIDE then measures the student's growth as a percentile from 1 to 99, with higher values indicating more growth relative to the student's academic peers. (For example, a student with a Student Growth Percentile of 90 showed more growth than 90 percent of his or her academic peers.) Districts, schools, and grades receive a growth-model score, which is the median percentile score among all students in the cohort. For example, if a school has a growth-model score of 61, half of the students in that school had a Student Growth Percentile below 61 and half had a Student Growth Percentile above 61.

For more information on the Rhode Island Growth Model, including a detailed explanation of how RIDE calculates student growth, see our website, at:

> http://www.ride.ri.gov/assessment/RIGM.aspx

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